

Acknowledgements

The following supplemental office action replaces the office action issued on 2/08/2010 which contains an error. The office action of 2/08/2010 and its accompanying paperwork indicated that claims 22 and 23 were allowed, while those claims had already been cancelled by the Applicant. Outside of this correction, the following supplemental office action is identical to the office action originally issued on 2/08/2010.

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 was filed in this application after a decision by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences, but before the filing of a Notice of Appeal to the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit or the commencement of a civil action. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114 and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the appeal has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114 and prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 1/19/10 has been entered.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1 - 2, 5 - 13, 16 and 18 - 20 are allowed.

Reasons for Allowance

The following is a statement of reasons for indication of allowable subject matter. The prior art fails to teach or suggest the limitations of:

"said agent device including user-information storage means for storing the ID information, user information regarding the user, and information regarding settlement means held by the user, in association with each other, purchase-instruction receiving means for receiving the first purchase instruction sent from said first purchase instruction sending means, user-information extraction means for searching said user-information storage means for user information based on the ID information of the user which is included in the first purchase-instruction, and extracting corresponding information regarding the user and corresponding information regarding the settlement means, when said purchase-instruction receiving means receives the first purchase instruction, second purchase-instruction sending means for sending, as a second purchase instruction, information regarding the product and being included in the first purchase-instruction received by said purchase-instruction receiving means, and information regarding the user and being extracted by said user-information extraction means, to the merchant site, and settlement requesting means for requesting said settlement device for settling an account for the purchased product, based on the information regarding the product and being included in the first purchase instruction received by said purchase-instruction receiving means and the information regarding the settlement means of the user and being extracted by said user-information extraction means." (as in Claim 1).

Such limitation is present in all independent claims.

It is old and well known in the art to perform online shopping using the Internet, purchasing items from a merchant website and then performing settlement functions for said purchases over the Internet. Furthermore, it is also old and well known in the art to utilize an agent device (e.g. an electronic wallet) to make the purchase and settlement processes easier for the consumer through automatic completion of purchase and settlement functions (e.g. auto-filling shipping instructions; provision of payment account numbers).

The instant application distinguishes from these old and well known practices by incorporating an agent device into the settlement path with the agent device performing the specific functions as claimed.

Koreeda (US Patent 5,890,137) discloses a method/system for online shopping comprising a user device (workstation) connected to a merchant site (shopping mall), and settlement being performed via a settlement device (approval center) and an agent device (service center). (see col. 5, line 33 – col. 6, line 2). Neither this patent, alone nor in combination with others, discloses nor suggests the feature of incorporating an agent device into the settlement path performing the specific functions as claimed.

O'Leary (US Patent 6,609,113) discloses a method/system for online shopping comprising a user device (workstation) connected to a merchant site (merchant website), and settlement being performed via a settlement or agent device (wallet). (see abstract; fig. 2). Neither this patent, alone nor in combination with others, discloses nor suggests the feature of incorporating an agent device into the settlement path performing the specific functions as claimed.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JASON M. BORLINGHAUS whose telephone number is (571)272-6924. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday; 9am - 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James A. Kramer can be reached on (571)272-6783. The fax phone

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number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Jason M Borlinghaus/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3693
April 26, 2010